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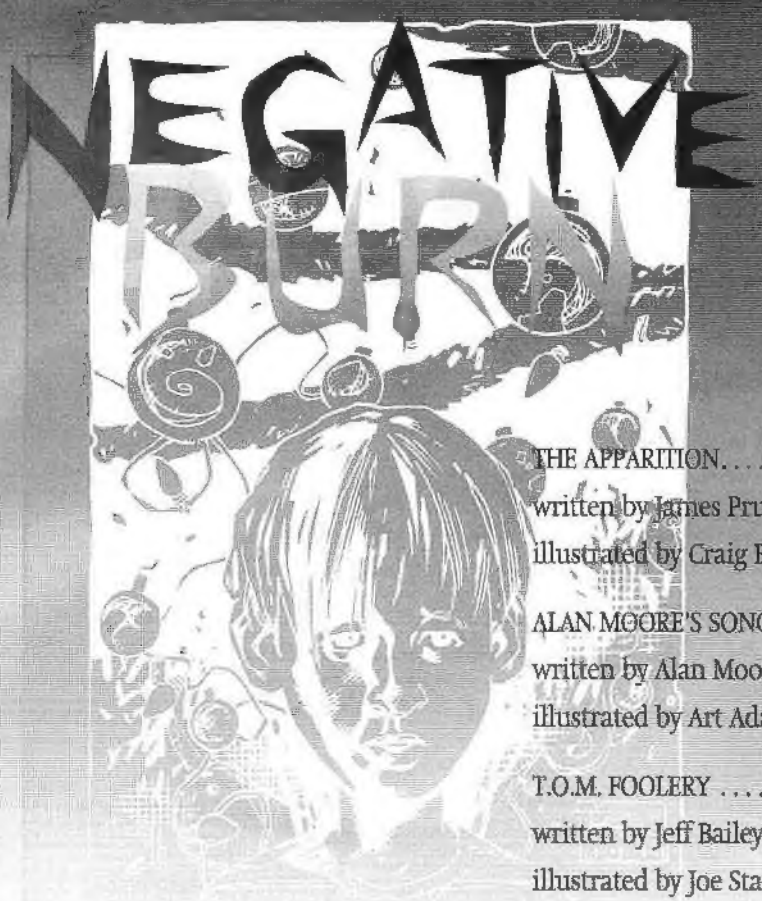
NEGATIVE BURN

ART ADAMS • ALAN MOORE • JAMES PRUETT • CRAIG BRASFIELD • BRIAN BOLLAND • PAUL POPE



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MR. MAMOULIAN..... Inside Back Cover
written and illustrated by Brian Bolland

Cover Art of THE APPARITION by Michael Gaydos

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THE Apparition
SALT OF MY TEARS
...I JUST DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU WANT FROM ME. BUT, I DO TRY TO UNDERSTAND YOU!...YOU HAVE TO BE ABLE TO ACCEPT ME FOR WHO AND WHAT I AM.
DON'T TRY TO CHANGE ME... NO, I DON'T THINK WE'RE GOING TO WORK OUT.
I'M SORRY I DON'T SATISFY YOUR VIEW OF PERFECTION!
WHY CAN'T HE JUST LOVE ME UNCONDITIONALLY? IS THAT TOO MUCH TO ASK?
WHY CAN'T HE BE MORE LIKE YOU?

GOD, WHY IS LIFE SO HARD? WHY IS IT FULL OF SO MUCH PAIN? IF YOU ARE REALLY THERE, PLEASE ANSWER ME. I'M SO TIRED OF THE PAIN...
...I'M JUST SO TIRED...WHY DO I HAVE TO SUFFER LIKE THIS? WHAT DID I DO?

I WISH I COULD JUST MAKE IT ALL GO AWAY.

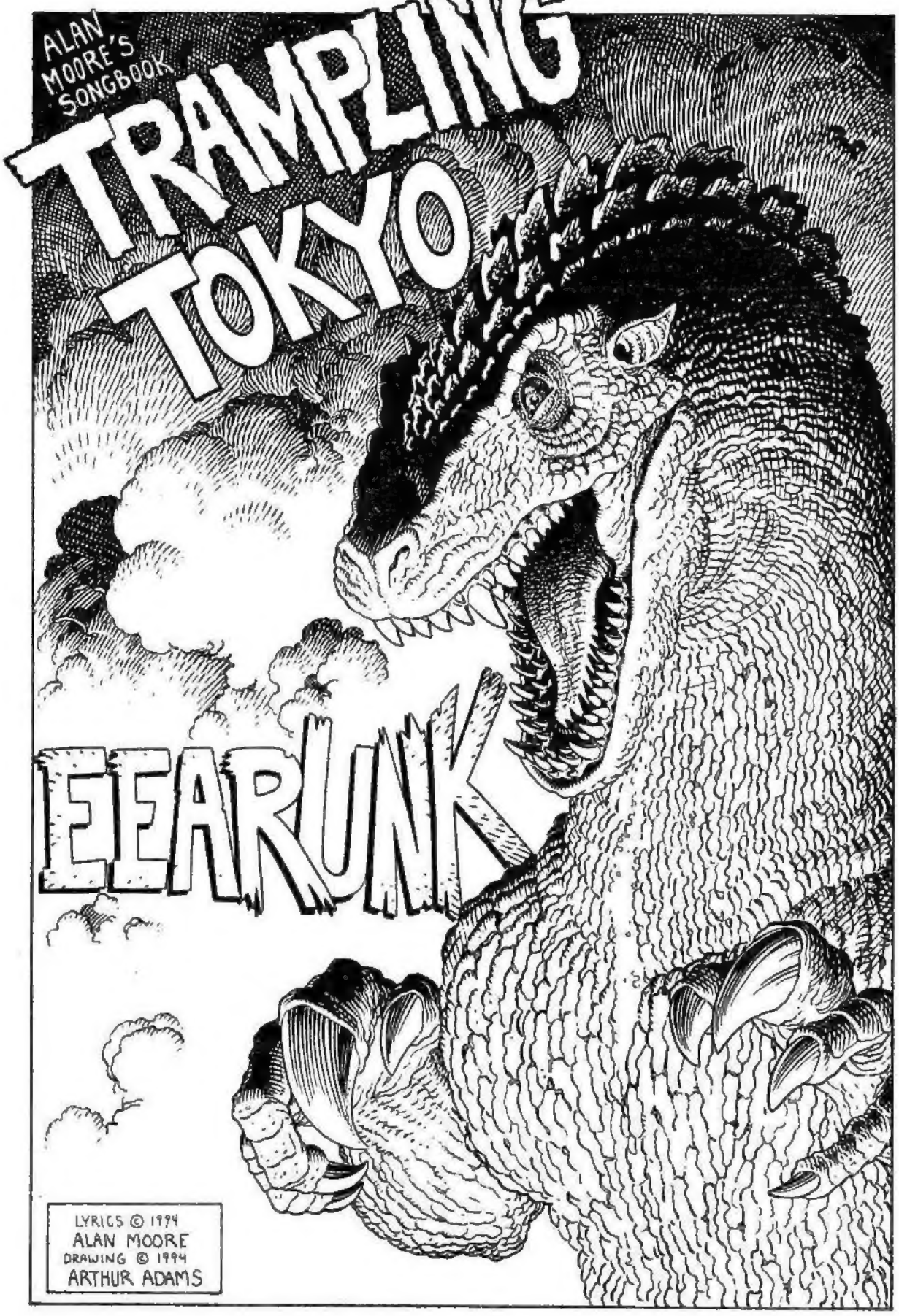
Noelle.

WHO ARE YOU ...WHAT ...WHAT DO YOU WANT?
You have nothing to fear from me, Noelle.
J'm here at the request of your pleas, your questions.
J merely wish to help you understand more about the miracle that is life.
WHO ARE YOU?
Someone who cares about you.

This artist was able to see the essence of life. Life is not about suffering. That is not His way.
Life is defined by the majesty of His vision... the fragrance of the flower... The purity of the water.
Can you see it, child? The answer is there before you.
IT...IT IS...SO...SO BEAUTIFUL.
It is life.

Life even exists within something that is not truly alive.
SMOOCH -*
Boy, am I hungry.
Where's the honey?
I just love honey.

Life is around us in things that we do not suspect. That doesn't make it any less precious.
It's also present in things such as a broken heart.
DOES LIFE EXIST EVEN WITHIN THE SALT OF MY TEARS?
Yes, little one, even in your tears.
Sorrow can actually be the seed for a transformation into something beautiful.
Sleep now, Noelle.
Sleep now and dream of miracles.
OH MAN, WHAT A WEIRD DREAM. I MUST HAVE REALLY BEEN OUT OF IT TO COME UP WITH THAT ONE.
OWW!
end


ALAN MOORE'S SONGBOOK
TRAMPLING TOKYO
EEARUNK
LYRICS © 1994
ALAN MOORE
DRAWING © 1994
ARTHUR ADAMS

I'M TIRED OF TRAMPLING TOKYO. NO INTEREST REMAINS
IN EATING CARS OR TEARING DOWN THE ELEVATED TRAINS
AND I LONG FOR MONSTER ISLAND
IN THE LATE CRETACEOUS SILENCE
WHERE EVERY NIGHT BENEATH THE PERFECT STARS
THE TINY TWINS HOLD HANDS AND SING
WHILE MOTHRA PLAYS GUITAR.

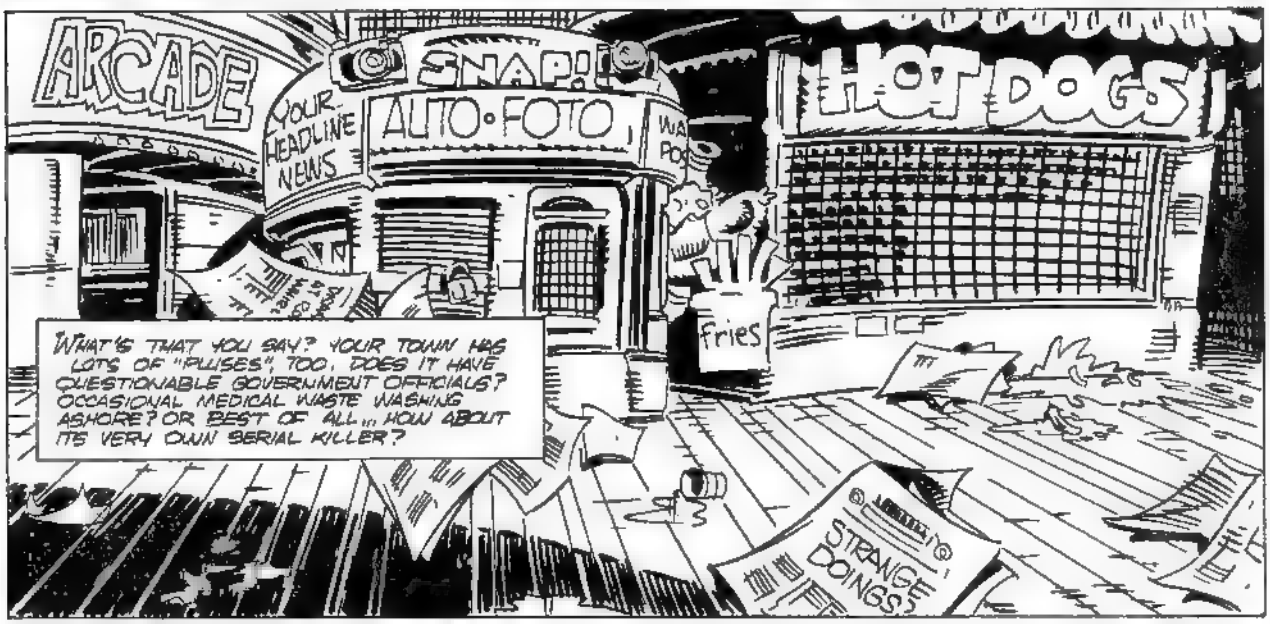
BAWWOOM

SHERASH

I'M BORED TO DEATH WHEN MY EVERY BREATH SETS THE BOULEVARD ON FIRE
I'M SAVING MY RESIDUALS AND I'M PLANNING TO RETIRE
FAR AWAY ON MONSTER ISLAND
IN THE RADIOACTIVE TWILIGHT
SIPPING X-RAYS UNDERNEATH A COCKTAIL SKY
WHERE THE SURF BOOMS LIKE HIROSHIMA
AND THE FISHES REALLY FLY.

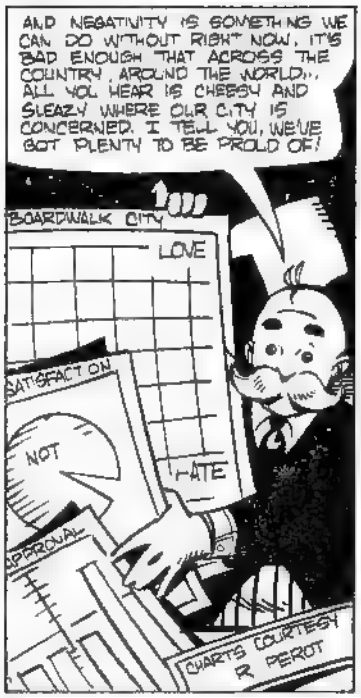
GHURUNK
ME AND ROBERT OPPENHEIMMER, WE SHARED A DRINK THE OTHER NIGHT
I TOLD HIM BOB, IF YOU QUIT YOUR JOB, OR IF THINGS AREN'T GOING RIGHT
COME WITH ME TO MONSTER ISLAND
WHERE THE PALM TREES GLEAM LIKE PYLONS
WHERE THE LUMINOUS LAGOON NIGHT NEVER ENDS
AND ALL MY MONSTER FRIENDS
ARE SINGIN' GOJIRA! GOJIRA! GO!
AND I'M SO TIRED OF TRAMPLING TOKYO.

SKILL TOSS
DIVING MULE
CASINO
BUCK LUCK
TRY YOUR LUCK
CASINO
CASINO
IF ELVIS WAS STILL RECORDING, HE'D DO A SONG ABOUT BOARDWALK CITY. THERE ARE ALL SORTS OF THINGS TO SING ABOUT... FANCY CASINOS, HIGH STAKES GAMBLING, BEAUTIFUL WOMEN AND ALL-YOU-CAN-EAT BUFFETS THAT NEVER CLOSE.


ARCADE
SNAP!
YOUR HEADLINE NEWS
AUTO•FOTO
HOT DOGS
fries
WHAT'S THAT YOU SAY? YOUR TOWN HAS LOTS OF "PLUSES", TOO. DOES IT HAVE QUESTIONABLE GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS? OCCASIONAL MEDICAL WASTE WASHING ASHORE? OR BEST OF ALL... HOW ABOUT ITS VERY OWN SERIAL KILLER?
STRANGE DOINGS

SOMEBODY IS ROAMING BOARDWALK CITY WHO'S A LITTLE DIFFERENT FROM EVERYONE ELSE. HE ACTS LIKE A MAN POSSESSED AND THE POLICE HAVE NO IDEA HOW TO HANDLE HIM. NO, WE'RE NOT TALKING ABOUT THE CRAZED KILLER AT WORK HERE. WE'RE TALKING ABOUT OUR HERO...
T.O.M. Foolery
TM
WHO OR WHAT IS T.O.M. FOOLERY?
And Where Does He Buy His Clothes?
T.O.M. FOOLERY
JUST ANOTHER COSTUMED MENACE by J.J. Jameson
Monday
HI NIX STIX PIX!
I DIDN'T LOSE MY SHIRT IN BOARDWALK CITY
BOARDWALK TATTLER
MIDWAY MANIAC STRIKES AGAIN AND AGAIN
by JEFF BAILEY MARTY GOLIA JOE STATON

SO WHAT'S THAT MAKE T? ARE WE UP TO SIX OR SEVEN "INCIDENTS"?
A FENDER-BENDER IN A PARKING LOT IS AN INCIDENT. BEING SUFFOCATED IN 100 POUNDS OF SOFT ICE CREAM IS CALLED MURDER MISTER MAYOR.
OH DAPHNE, THAT "MURDER" WORD. IT'S JUST SO, NEGATIVE


AND NEGATIVITY IS SOMETHING WE CAN DO WITHOUT RIGHT NOW. IT'S BAD ENOUGH THAT ACROSS THE COUNTRY, AROUND THE WORLD... ALL YOU HEAR IS CHEESY AND SLEAZY WHERE OUR CITY IS CONCERNED. I TELL YOU, WE'VE GOT PLENTY TO BE PROUD OF!
BOARDWALK CITY
LOVE
SATISFACTION
NOT
HATE
APPROVAL
QUARTS COURTESY R PEROT

AND THIS IS SOMETHING TO HOLD UP AS A SYMBOL OF BOARDWALK CITY? A LUNATIC WHO DRESSES TERRIBLY AND INSISTS ON SOLVING ALL HIS PROBLEMS WITH HIS FISTS! IS THIS REALLY ANYONE'S IDEA OF A SOLUTION?
ARTIST'S CONCEPTION

LET'S TRY NOT TO GET TOO WORRIED. WE HAVE SOME VAGUE REPORTS, USUALLY BY "QUESTIONABLE" SOURCES, OF WHAT THIS TOM FOOLERY IS UP TO. IT MAY ALL BLOW OVER.
ON THE OTHER HAND, WE DO HAVE PROOF POSITIVE OF AT LEAST ONE CERTIFIABLE CASE STUDY. IT MIGHT BE WISE TO INVEST OUR TIME AND EFFORTS IN BRINGING HIM OR HER, TO JUSTICE. DOES ANYONE HAVE AN OPINION?
BUMPER CAR CRASH!

HOW ABOUT THOSE REPORTERS ON...
ARM THE PUBLIC...
BRING IN THE MILITARY...
LEARN JUDO IN OUR SPARE TIME.
BEEF UP THE POLICE FORCE...
DID YOU SAY BEEF? IS ANYONE ELSE HUNGRY?
HOW ABOUT CHINESE?

IN BOARDWALK CITY, OCCASIONALLY SOMETHING GETS DONE, DESPITE EVERYONE'S BEST EFFORTS.

EARLY EVENING ON THE BOARDWALK...
GABRIELLE,
EVAN,
WAVES LAPPING AGAINST THE BEACH... SEA GULLS IN THE AIR...
...AND A TV CREW ON EVERY CORNER.
YOU BIMBO! I'M THE SENIOR ANCHOR. I ALWAYS GET THE LEAD!
YOU CERTAINLY QUALIFY FOR THE SENIOR PART! LET ME GET YOU YOUR WALKER!
CALM DOWN. THINK ABOUT YOUR HAIR, YOUR TEETH, YOUR RATINGS!
WATCH THE HANDS, BUDDY!
ZIP IT, LADY, I'M UNION.
ALRIGHT THEN -- THE CAMERA CREW WILL STAY HIDDEN. THE WIRELESS MICROPHONES WILL RECORD WHAT YOU SAY. THIS TRANSMITTER SHOULD ALWAYS GIVE US A TRACE ON YOU. YOUR MEDICAL COVERAGE IS PAID UP. WE'VE NOTIFIED YOUR NEXT OF KIN. YOU'RE READY TO GO OUT AND TRY TO PICK UP A CRAZED KILLER!
MOST OF THIS EQUIPMENT TRANSMITS USING RADIO WAVES, SO TRY TO STAY OUT IN THE OPEN -- ON HIGHER GROUND AND STAY AWAY FROM NEON LIGHTS!
WE CAN TRY AND GET HIM ON THE FERRIS WHEEL.
MAYBE WE CAN LURE THIS GUY TO A BIG OPEN FIELD.
HOW ABOUT A BIG MOVING BILLBOARD. WOULDN'T THAT LOOK REALLY DYNAMIC!
WHUMP!
WELCOME FRIENDLY BOARDWALK
BEEP BEEP BEEP BEEP BEEP BEEP
CAUTION TRAM CROSSING

LATER ON THE BOARDWALK (AND AT THE TV STATION'S EXPENSE...)
WHAK-A-MOLE
BET BET
BUFFET
EVERYBODY WINS
BAM BAM
WHAM
ZAM
SQUID ON A-STICK!
TV CREW WIPED OUT IN FREAK TRAM ACCIDENT FILM AT ELEVEN.
WANNA GET TAKEN FOR A RIDE?
MUD WRESTLING
AMY F SCH
VS
TONYA HARD
I'VE SEEN A LOT OF TOURISTS DO NG THIS. WHAT DO YOU SAY?
IF IT HELPS DRAIN OUT THIS MANIAC I'M ALL FOR IT
ONCE ALONG THE BOARDWALK THEN, AND I'M GO NG TO NEED A RECEIPT
I HAVEN'T SEEN OUR CREW ALL NIGHT. THEY'VE REALLY DONE A GOOD JOB OF KEEPING OUT OF SIGHT.
WWWHHHHAAAA
HY ROLLERS
HY ROLLERS CASINO and BUFFET
YOU KNOW GABRIELLE, FOR THE FIRST TIME TONIGHT, I REALLY FEEL SAFE.
DOOM ALIEN
BRAINIAC HOPE ALL

SAY! THIS S A PART OF TOWN I HAVEN'T SEEN BEFORE
DO YOU THINK WE SHOULD ASK HIM TO TURN AROUND?
Doc Chill call homey
YOU KNOW, I THINK THIS IS THE ALLEY WHERE THEY FOUND THE FIRST VICTIM..
IT IS?! ARE YOU GUYS GETTING THIS? WE'RE IN THE VERY SAME ALLEY WHERE THEY FOUND...
SNIKT!
SOUVENIER FOR THE LADY?
UH-OH!
WHAT--!
HOW?
WHY--!
WHEN--?
WHO--?
IT'S ME!!
HEY, THIS IS GREAT! WILL YOU BE MY ARCH ENEMY?
I GUESS THAT WRAPS IT UP.
HEY! LOOK AT THAT!
DIVING MULE
SQUID SHOW
CASINO
CAUTION TRAM CROSSING
'SCUSE US! PARDON--! COMING THROUGH!
GET THE CAMERAS OUT! WE'RE GOING LIVE!!
PRODUCER

I BET ONE OF US CAN'T SWIM-- AND I THINK IT'S ME!
FRANCIS SPITZ the DIVING RAULE
SO I KILLED SOME PEOPLE! THEY WERE ONLY TOURISTS! IT'S NOT LIKE THEY PAID PROPERTY TAXES HERE!
WHAT?!?!?
HA'S OKAY I WASN'T BREATHING ANYWAY!
ARE WE STILL ON TV? I SHOULD MAKE THIS LOOK GOOD FOR THE CITY!
WHAT OTHER COLORFUL LANDMARKS CAN WE DESTROY AROUND HERE?
HOW 'BOUT THIS PLACE?
NO! NOT HERE!
TATTOO PARLOR
CLOSED
I SUPPOSE THIS IS WHEN I LEARN YOUR SECRET ORIGIN...
WHY NOT? I DON'T WANT TO KEEP YOU ON PINS AND NEEDLES!!

"I LEARNED THE ART OF THE TATTOO FROM MY FATHER HE OWNED THIS PARLOR LIKE HIS FATHER BEFORE HIM. LATER HE SENT ME TO EUROPE TO LEARN THE FINE ARTS...
TAT
"WHILE THERE, I FOUND MY TRUE CALLING -- THE SUBJECT MATTER THAT WOULD MAKE ME IMMORTAL!"
"UNFORTUNATELY THE PHILISTINES WHO FREQUENTED THIS BOARDWALK DIDN'T APPRECIATE MY TALENTS."
SO I'LL MAKE THIS CITY A GHOST TOWN! STARTING WITH THESE TOURISTS!
AND I'LL BEND OVER BACKWARD TO HELP YOU!
NOT BAD, BUT I DON'T THINK YOUR HEART WAS IN IT!
ROCK-STAR
MINOR DEITY
LET ME GIVE IT A SHOT--!
WOMP!
CRASH!
BIG BUCK
CASI
SALAD BAR
TONIGHT! JOEY HEATHERTON'S HOORAY FOR HOLLAND!
GOPHER TOSS
EEEEEEEEK!
I'VE HAD DREAMS LIKE THIS...

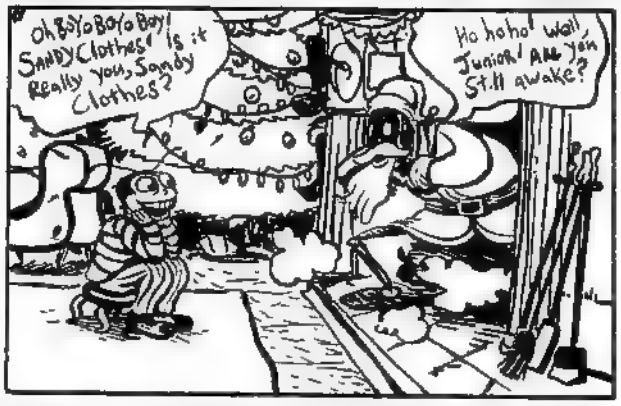
TIME TO BRING DOWN THE CURTAIN ON THIS CAPER!
CLOG!
OOPS! WRONG ROPE! PROPER LABELING OF ROPES CAN PREVENT THIS SORT OF THING.
YOU KNOW IT'S ALMOST RONC!!!
EEEEEEW!
YOU! YOU'RE THE GOOD GUY, RIGHT?
GOOD IS A RELATIVE TERM. I WAS BETTER THAN HIM...
WHY ARE YOU HERE?
LIKE ANY VISITOR TO OUR FAIR CITY I'M HERE TO FIND TRUTH, JUSTICE, AND CHEAP GAUDY THRILLS!
WELL, MY FRIENDS, FOR BETTER OR WORSE...
I SEEMS WE'VE FOUND OUR HERO!
End

HEY KIDS! WANT TO SEE MORE OF **T.O.M. FOOLERY?**
HE WANTS TO SEE MORE OF YOU!
WRITE TO EPCA, BOX 17735, ROCHESTER, NY 14617

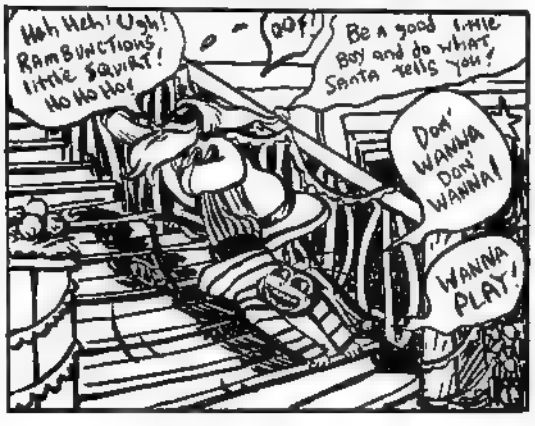
Bumbuz in "My Rottenest Christmas Ever!"

© POPE 11-94

The Stockings were hung By the chimney with care! In hopes that Saint Nickel-Plated-us would Soon Be there! And all that!
Ah, Christmas! How I do love Christmas!



My Mommy an' Daddy puts me to Bed But I drinks up lots of coffee An' I stays up and I Spies on you is Comin' down the Chim-in-ey Froms my Window panes!
Well, little feller! Let's go put you Back under the covers! Ho Ho!

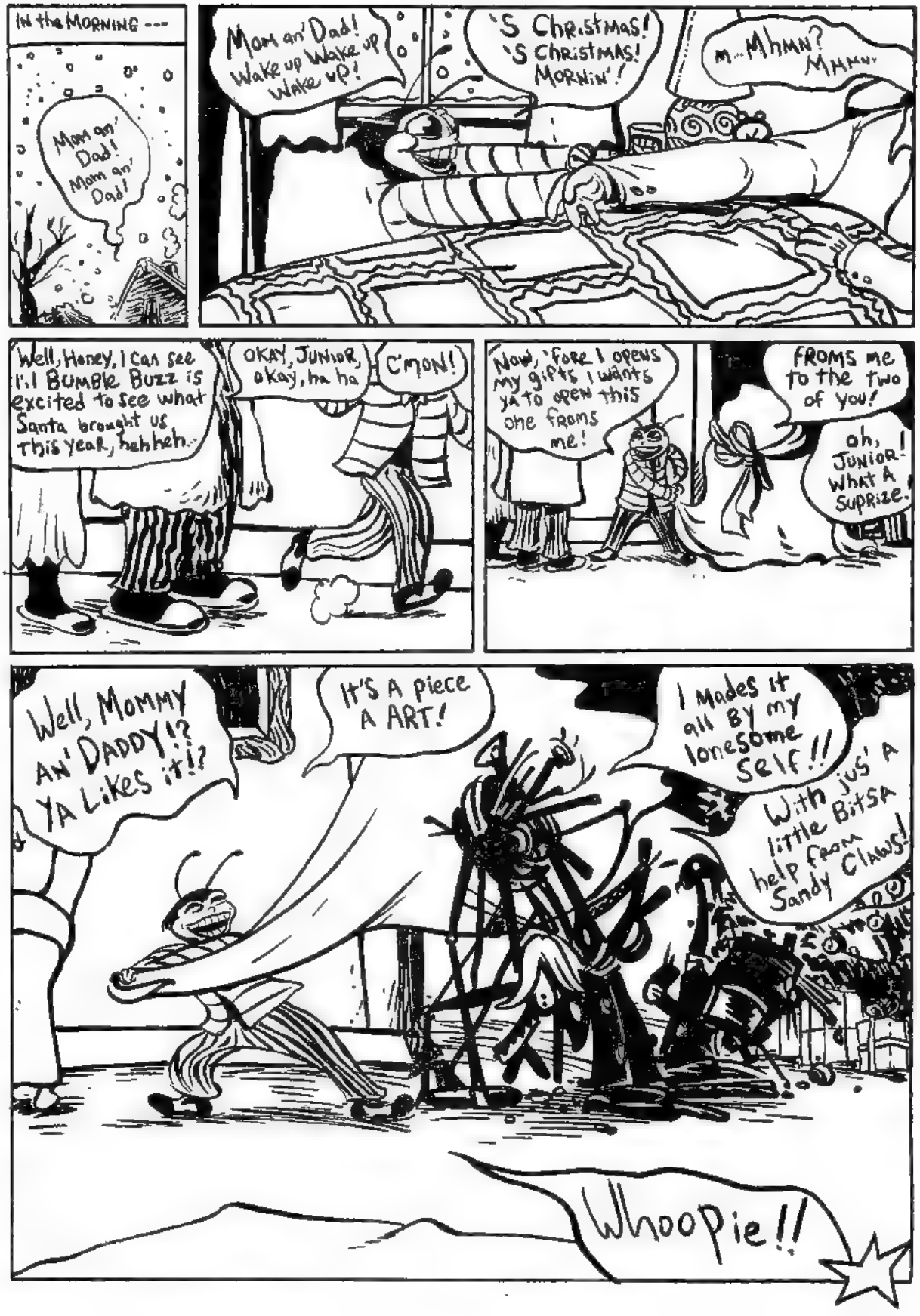

Heh Heh! Ugh! RAMBUNCTIOUS little SQUIRT! Ho Ho Ho!
OOF!
Be a good little Boy and do what Santa tells you!
Don' WANNA Don' WANNA!
WANNA PLAY!

90258-010
.B B# 331-808

COME ON, YOU little Dickens! It's Time for BED!
OOF!
THUD!
BUT I WANNA looks IN YOUR bag OF presents, Sandy Claws! Whod'cha Brings me dis year!?
HUH? HUH?
Ho ho ho! Why, you little So-and-So!! You'll find out in the morning!
I MEAN, HO! HO! HO!
Hey, DANNY Clowes! You isn't eatin' these cookies mommy left you is YA?! YUM!
SANTA
NOW, listen to me you ornery little NUISANCE! IT'S Time To leave poor SANTA Alone! BEDTime!
NOT A CREATURE WAS STIRRING AND All That Business!
OKAY
HEY! You's Roughhandlin' me, Pandy Claus!
SOCK
Aah!
Leggo me!
Ahh! MY OPTIC SENSOR!
It's! It's RUINED!
Hey, ANTI-CLAUSE WANNA SEE A GOOD FUN THING TO DO!? LOOKA DIS!
BZZZT!!
YOW!
YIPES!
Whoopie! You is FUNNY, Candy Boss!
Isn't that a FUN and NEAT-O TRICK?
I learns it from this Book you BRings me last YEAR!
Wee!
101 PRANKS and PRACTICAL JOKES
by Stinkin Butts Phil
BUT I dONT'S likes this one! It's TOO OUMB AND THE PITCHURES ARE YUCKY! INFACK--
IT STINKS!!
My daddy only lets me READS COMICS that is IMPROVIN' TO my MORAL CONSTITUSHUN! Like : THE PUNISHER"!
BOWL
But my daddy likes this thing you BRings him last YEAR and I does too!
IT CUTS THROUGH anythings!
DONT'S believes me?
OH NO!
WATCH DIS!!
2

GRRieeND!
TOLD YA!
SEE!
KID HEY, KID!
OOH!
AH!
OH JEEZE! BUT YA GOTS TA STILL GOES AN' VISITS All the good boys an' girlies!
HEY SANTY!
HOWS CAN YA DO IT WITH A SAWED OFF LEGS!? Lemmie gives 'em Back ON FOR YA!
Kid, Kid! Lemmie- Just- What- Ay-ee- I-OH- You- Sometimes-
WHY--
There!
You is good as new!
Kid, please! I must deliver my gifts tonight!
OH! GOSH Santa Boss! You is gonna irritable With me! I--I
Din' wanna gets YA upset an' testy with me? Smelly CROSS! You don' like me!
Now, don't go crying, child
But, but, you is thinkin' I'm nasty, Rotten an' all Spoiled up!
You thinks I--I don' know anythings 'bouts the meanin' of Christmas!
Wah! Uh-Uh--
I knows Christmas is a Time of Joy an' good cheer an' piece of ART an what they says on the Tee Vee Show!
Aw Christmas is a Time of Givin' an' of havin' friends!
Well, you is my friend, Sandy!
Oh, no
I am?
Sure you is! My friend, Handy Clothes! Here! Have a glassa milk!
G'WAN! I knows you is big an' fat but it's okay! It's SKIM MILK!
Wes friends both, SAM. T.?
Oh, uh, I, thank you..
Uh
Hyuck! This- This "Milk" Tastes Awful!
ACK!
OH? Does?
I wonner if its 'Cause I puts somma THIS in it!?
Jes' for flavour!
HCL
3

See, Lookie! "H-C-L" An' dat spells "chocolate syrup"!
I finds it under th' SINK NEXT A' th' stuff for unclogging the drain!
OOH!
OH MY GOSH, Santy!
You is makin' a MESS onna kitchen floor! Tee Hee!
C'mon down Stairs' I'll wash up YOUR coat lickety-split!
No! No! Really! I'm fine! Thanks!
AAH!
Get in there Sandy!
Glub! Glub!
Nows I'll jes' dries YA off! I'll iron out yer COAT!
JUSSA Minute!
YAAH!
HEY, STOP SQUIRMIN' AROUND!
This iron ain't doin' A good 'NUFF JOB!
I KNOW! C'mon Back up the Stairs!
This is what MOM uses TA IRON out the Waffles!
YOW!!
Gollie, Santy! Now lookit that! YA should'a held still!
YA gots A flat head! You look Silly!
We'll put it in the TRASH SMASHER!
This'll get YA fresh an' good as NEW!
Hole Still, Sandy!
WA-HOO!


IN the MORNING ---
Mom an' Dad! Mom an' Dad!
Mom an' Dad! Wake up Wake up Wake up!
'S CHRISTMAS! 'S CHRISTMAS! MORNIN'!
M...MHMN? MHMM.
Well, Honey, I can see I'l BUMBLE BUZZ is excited to see what Santa brought us This year, heh heh...
OKAY, JUNIOR, okay, ha ha
C'MON!
Now, 'fore I opens my gifts I wants ya TO OPEN this one froms me!
FROMS me to the two of you!
oh, JUNIOR! WHAT A SUPRIZE.
Well, MOMMY AN' DADDY!? YA LIKES it!?
IT'S A piece A ART!
I Maded it all BY my lonesome self!!
With jus' A little BitSA help from Sandy Claws!
Whoopie!!

CLASSICS DESECRATED

GOOD KING HOP-A'-LONG

AN EXERCISE IN BAD TASTE, MADE EVEN WORSE BY:
DOUG WHEELER and GEORGE BRODERICK, JR.

ONCE UPON A TIME, A PARTICULARLY BUSY AND INDUSTRIOUS LITTLE BEAVER WAS OUT GATHERING WOOD FOR HIS HOME...
DANGER
HIGH VOLTAGE
...WHEN HE ACCIDENTALLY STEPPED IN A BAD AND NASTY DEVICE LEFT BY MEAN AND INCONSIDERATE MISTER HUNTER

AS THE POOR LITTLE BEAVER THOUGHT ABOUT HOW MISTER HUNTER WOULD WANT TO PEEL HIS SKIN AND FUR RIGHT OFF HIM --
WHEN!
-- AND HOW HE MIGHT NOT ENJOY THAT AT ALL --
-- HE DECIDED THEN AND THERE TO GNAW HIS TINY, CUTE FOOT STRAIGHT OFF, AND THUS, ESCAPE THE WICKED TRAP WITH HIS LIFE!
ONCE SAFE AT HOME, ALL HIS NEIGHBORS BROUGHT HIM SO MUCH COOKIES AND CAKE AND CHEETOS AND BEER (TO HELP HIM RECOVER FROM HIS INJURY)
MOM
BEER
... THAT HE WAS SORELY TEMPTED TO GNAW OFF YET ANOTHER LEG, JUST TO KEEP THE PRESENTS COMING
BEER

LUCKILY HOWEVER JUST AS THE LITTLE BEAVER WAS BEGINNING TO SHARPEN HIS TEETH, A FRIEND OF HIS CAME WITH SOME NEWS
I'VE HEARD WORD OF A KING HOP-A-LONG, WHO CAN FIND NEW LIMBS FOR THOSE MISSING THEIRS!
AND SO THE BEAVER WITH THREE LEGS SET OUT TO FIND THIS KING, HOP A LONG, TRAVELLING MANY DAYS ALONG THE KING'S ROAD
UNTIL HE CAME UPON A DOG WITH TWO LEGS WHO WAS FORCED TO WALK UPRIGHT JUST LIKE MEN AND WOMEN DO
GOOD DAY FRIEND DOG!
THIS WAY
THAT WAY
GOOD DAY TO YOU FRIEND BEAVER! AND TO WHERE ARE YOU TRAVELLING?
I'M GOING TO SEE KING HOP A LONG AS I'VE HEARD HE CAN RESTORE MISSING LIMBS!
TELL ME, WHAT HAPPENED TO YOUR TWO FRONT LEGS?
I LOST THEM IN A SAUSAGE FACTORY THE MACHINES ARE SO DANGEROUS, NONE OF THE TOWN'S MEN OR WOMEN OR EVEN CHILDREN HAVE ANY OF THEIR ARMS LEFT...
SAK-O-SUET 5000
WAYNE R. SCHNITZEL'S WEINERSCHNITZEL
NOW YOU ARE A MAN!
GROUND CHUCK
...AND SO, THEY WERE FORCED TO HIRE DOGS AND CATS TO DO THE WORK.

BUT, ALAS, NO HUMAN WANTS TO BE MASTER OF A DOG WHOSE WALK IMITATES HIM, AND SO, NOW I AM ALONE!
WHY DON'T YOU COME WITH ME TO SEE KING HOP-A-LONG? PERHAPS HE CAN FIND YOU SOME LEGS, TOO!
AND SO, THE BEAVER WITH THREE LEGS AND THE DOG WITH TWO LEGS TRAVELLED TOGETHER, UNTIL THEY CAME UPON A COCK WITH ONLY ONE LEG.
I LOST MY LEG IN A COCK FIGHT MY OWNER FORCED ME INTO. EVER SINCE, HE FEEDS ME POORLY.
THEN COME WITH US, AND WE'LL SEE IF WE CAN FIND YOUR MISSING LEG.
THE BEAVER WITH THREE LEGS, THE DOG WITH TWO LEGS, AND THE COCK WITH ONE LEG AGREED TO ACCOMPANY EACH OTHER, JOURNEYING SEVERAL DAYS...
...UNTIL THEY MET WITH A SNAKE WHO HAD NO LEGS AT ALL!
HOW DID YOU LOSE YOUR LEGS, FRIEND SNAKE?
WHEN SATAN TEMPTED EVE WITH THE APPLE, HE DISGUISED HIMSELF AS A SNAKE.
...AND GOD, TO MAKE CERTAIN HE GOT SATAN, RIPPED THE LEGS OFF EVERY SNAKE *
I HEAR SATAN DISGUISES HIMSELF AS HUMANS, TOO. AND I'M WAITING FOR THE DAY WHEN GOD WILL PULL OFF ALL THEIR LIMBS AS WELL!
PERHAPS THAT DAY WILL COME SOON. JUST THINK OF ALL THE BONES!
BUT IN THE MEANTIME, WOULD YOU LIKE TO COME WITH US TO SEE KING HOP-A-LONG? PERHAPS HE CAN FIND YOUR LEGS AS WELL!
* CHECK OUT THIS PULSE-POUNDING EPIC IN GENESIS 3:14, TRUE BELIEVERS!-- *Digitless Doug.*

AND SO, THE BEAVER WITH THREE LEGS, THE DOG WITH TWO LEGS, THE COCK WITH ONE LEG, AND THE SNAKE WITH NO LEGS AT ALL CAME, AT LAST, TO THE CASTLE OF GOOD KING HOP-A-LONG...
HO, HO, NO! "RESTORE LOST LIMBS"?! I'M AFRAID YOU'VE HEARD THAT BACKWARDS! --
-- I DON'T RESTORE LIMBS! I TAKE THEM AWAY!
I KNEW JUSTICE WOULD SOMEDAY BE SERVED!
EVERY CREATURE WHO ENTERS MY KINGDOM IS REQUIRED TO FORFEIT AN ARM OR A LEG, SO THAT ALL MAY BE SIMILARLY HANDICAPPED, AND NO DISCRIMINATION EXISTS!
BUT SINCE YOU FOUR ALREADY HAD MISSING LIMBS WHEN YOU CAME HERE, I SHALL HONOR YOU BY MAKING YOU ALL CABINET MINISTERS!
AND SO, THE KING MADE THEM ROYAL BUREAUCRATS AND BROUGHT THEM TO A WONDROUS GARDEN...
...FILLED WITH RHINOS AND ELEPHANTS WHOSE HORNS HAD BEEN STOLEN, AND SPIDERS WHOSE LEGS WERE PLUCKED OUT BY LITTLE BOYS...
...AND FROGS WHOSE LEGS HAD BEEN DEEP-FRIED AND EATEN, AND A MAN WHOSE WIFE HAD CAUGHT HIM CHEATING AND... uh...
...WELL, AT LEAST HE STILL HAD HIS ARMS AND LEGS!
THEY ALL (except the man) LIVED HAPPILY EVER AFTER!
The End

Seasons Change

I can remember when I still enjoyed Christmas.

Just last year I couldn't wait to open my presents. I'd sneak downstairs in the middle of the night, careful to be as quiet as possible, so as not to wake up my Mom and Dad.

This year is different.

The presents don't mean the same. Not because I didn't get what I asked for. I always, well, almost always, get what I want. No, this year there's something missing.

My Mom's not here.

Poor Dad. He's tried so hard to make Christmas go on as usual. Actually, he's probably worked twice as hard as any year before.

It's not his fault that Mom isn't here anymore. Grandma says that "Mom is in a better place." I don't understand that. Wasn't she happy here with us?

I know I'm a big boy and I'm not suppose to cry, but... I miss her so much.

"It's normal to fill sorrow and emptiness, Christopher."

Written by Joe Pruett
Illustrated by Andrew Robinson
Designed by Shinn Uehara

I glanced up and there stood a tall man with long blonde hair, tied in a ponytail, like a girl. He wore a trenchcoat, similar to my Dad's, except his appeared kinda worn out, like my first baseball mitt. He didn't look really old, but, at the same time, he didn't seem too young.

"How' d you know my name?"

"I know much. I know how you feel. You feel hollow... betrayed. Someone you loved has left you suddenly alone. No one talks to you since no one knows what to say. They only want to tell you that they love you, but don't know how."

"Why did Mom have to go?"

"She didn't want to, Christopher. No, your mother would give anything to be with you. She just isn't able. Each person only has an infinite amount of time that they have on this plane. When their time is up, they move on."

"Where did she go?"

"To a place where she no longer has any worries. To a place of eternal peace and solitude."

"Is she in Heaven?"

"You could say that."

"She's far away from here, yet, she's still close. She sees you, Christopher, and she watches over you. She doesn't want to see you unhappy."

"Christmas was her favorite time of the year, wasn't it?"

"Yes."

"She would want it to be your favorite time as well. Just remember, although she may not be here in person, she is here in spirit. Part of her spirit will always be with you...

...deep in your heart...

...and in your memories."

"Treasure your memories, Christopher. They are worth more than any present you could ever receive."

After saying that, the strange man in the dirty, raggedy coat turned to walk away. As if he had someplace else he needed to be.

"Wait!"

I ran over to him and looked into his eyes. There was so much hurt and pain there. I think he needed a friend more than I did.

"You never told me your name?"

"My name? My name is Kilroy."

"Christopher! Time to come in! Dinner's on the table!"

"My Dad is calling me. I have to go."

"I know."

"Thank you. What you said meant a lot to me."

"You mean a lot to your mother... and your father. You have people that love and care for you. Don't ever forget that. You're very lucky."

"Christopher! Hurry up! After we eat we can open presents!"

I turned towards my Dad's voice to answer, "Coming, Dad!"

Kilroy wasn't there anymore. It was like that movie on TV last week when the Invisible Man unwrapped his bandages and disappeared. It was like he vanished in thin air.

"Merry Christmas, Kilroy."

I ran back toward the house, skipping up the steps of the front porch, and paused and looked at the porch-swing where me and Mom would sit and rock the afternoons away.

I can't explain it, but I suddenly felt like Mom was there, smiling at me.

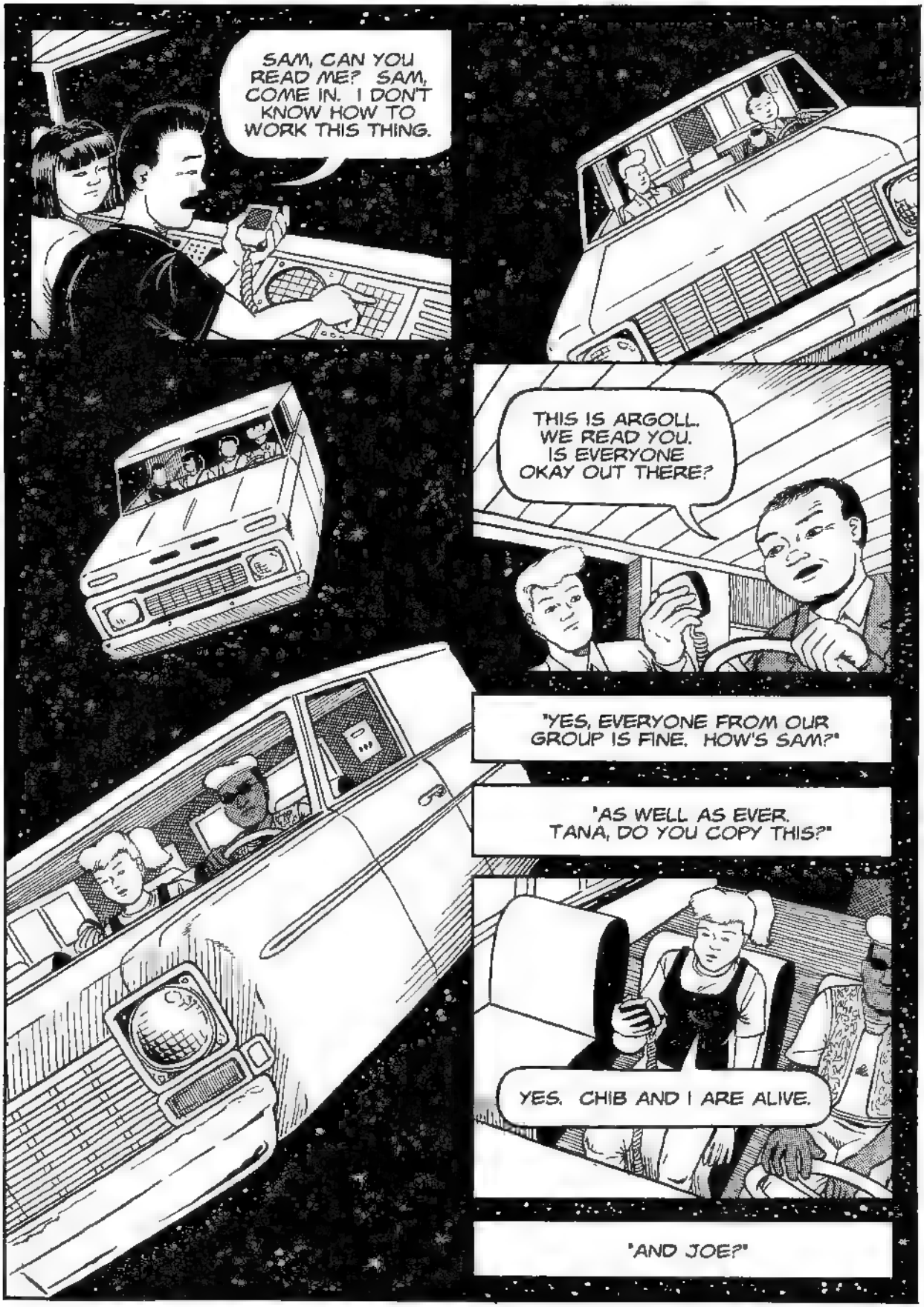
I love you, Mom.

I always will.

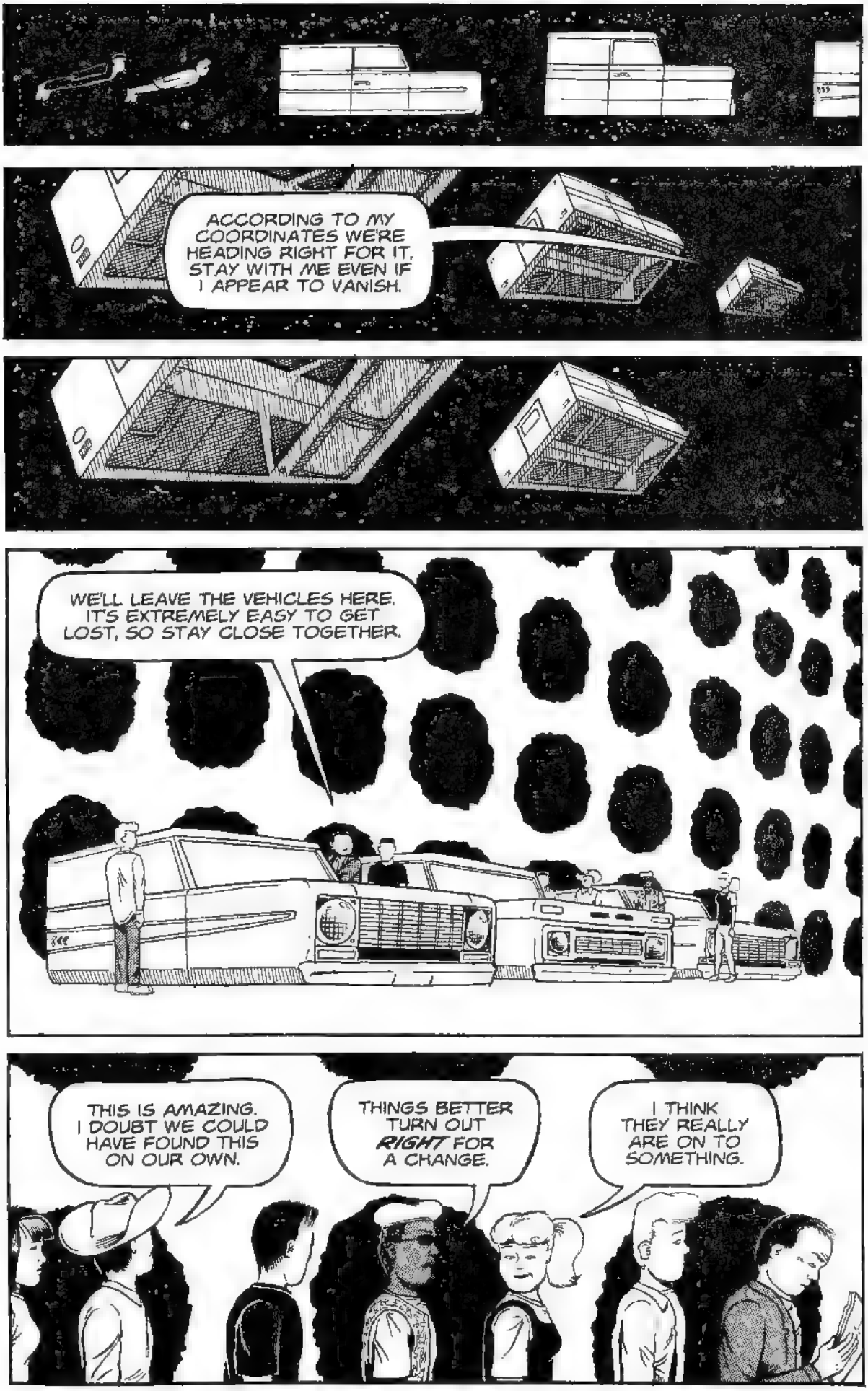
Seasons Change

ChapTeR SeVeN:

PLEASE EXIT CAREFULLY


SAM, CAN YOU READ ME? SAM, COME IN. I DON'T KNOW HOW TO WORK THIS THING.
THIS IS ARGOLL. WE READ YOU. IS EVERYONE OKAY OUT THERE?
"YES, EVERYONE FROM OUR GROUP IS FINE. HOW'S SAM?"
"AS WELL AS EVER. TANA, DO YOU COPY THIS?"
YES. CHIB AND I ARE ALIVE.
"AND JOE?"

YOU HEARD. TANA AND I ARE FINE. LET'S GO!
WE'RE GETTING AS CALLOUS OVER DEATH AS EVERYONE ELSE AROUND HERE.
GO WHERE?
TO THAT DOORWAY ARGOLL DISCOVERED. IT'S OUR ONLY OPTION.
ARGOLL. CAN YOU LEAD US TO THOSE PASSAGEWAYS?
I BELIEVE I COULD. I STILL HAVE MY NOTES.
LET'S GET GOING. WE'LL FOLLOW YOU. HOPEFULLY VINCE WILL TAG ALONG.
LOOK. OUR SCOUTING PARTIES. THEY MUST BE ON TO SOMETHING.
LET'S TAIL 'EM.


ACCORDING TO MY COORDINATES WE'RE HEADING RIGHT FOR IT. STAY WITH ME EVEN IF I APPEAR TO VANISH.
WE'LL LEAVE THE VEHICLES HERE. IT'S EXTREMELY EASY TO GET LOST, SO STAY CLOSE TOGETHER.
THIS IS AMAZING. I DOUBT WE COULD HAVE FOUND THIS ON OUR OWN.
THINGS BETTER TURN OUT *RIGHT* FOR A CHANGE.
I THINK THEY REALLY ARE ON TO SOMETHING.

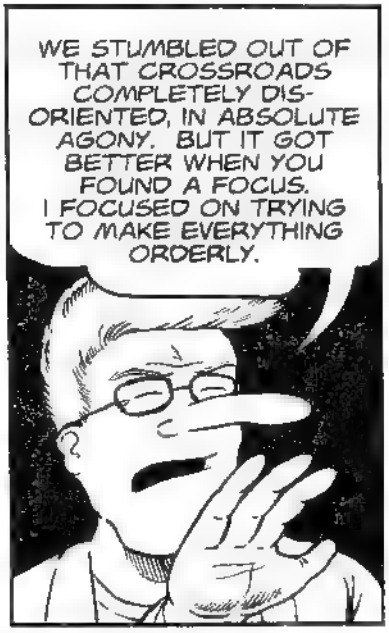
ACCORDING TO MY NOTES, THIS IS THE ONE I HAD ENTERED. NOW, CAPTAIN, WHY ARE WE HERE?
THIS IS JUST A HUNCH, EVERYONE, BUT IT SEEMS TO MAKES SENSE TO ME.
ASSUMING ANY LOGIC STILL APPLIES IN THIS UNIVERSE.
C'MON! SPIT IT OUT.
IF ARGOLL WENT INTO A DIMENSION WHERE HE BECAME WEAK, VULNERABLE, AND UNABLE TO MANIPULATE ANY MATTER AROUND HIM, WOULDN'T THE OPPOSITE BE TRUE FOR SOMEONE ENTERING OUR DIMENSION FROM THERE?
WOULDN'T THEY BECOME POWERFUL, INVULNERABLE, AND ABLE TO MANIPULATE MATTER TO AN EXTRA-ORDINARY DEGREE? AS THOUGH BY MAGIC?
YOU'RE SAYING THIS IS WHERE VINCE CAME FROM?
YES. HOW WE FORCE HIM TO RETURN, WITH ALL OF HIS POWER, THAT'S ANOTHER THING.
HELLO, THERE. WHAT HAVE YOU COME UP WITH?
HAVE WE MISSED ALL THE FUN?
IT'S THOSE GEEK GODS!
WHAT'S IN HERE? WHAT ARE YOU HIDING?
YIPES! IT'S VINCE!

VINCE, IT'S ME. HIROBUMI. THE ONE YOU SPOKE TO.
HOW EXCITING. NOW YOU CAN SPEAK TO ME.
WHAT THE HELL'S GOING ON HERE?
WE HAVE A, UHH . . . AN OFFERING FOR YOU. A PRESENT.
IT'S IN THERE.
WHAT KIND OF CRAP IS THIS?
WHAT COULD YOU POSSIBLY HAVE THAT I WOULD . . .
HEY. THAT'S . . . HOME. THAT'S HOME!
WHAT?!?
LOOK AT US! LOOK AT YOU!
WE'RE BACK THEY WAY WE WERE. IT WASN'T A DREAM. BUT HOW?
WITH VINCE GONE, THE PHYSICAL CHANGES HE CAUSED ARE GONE, TOO.

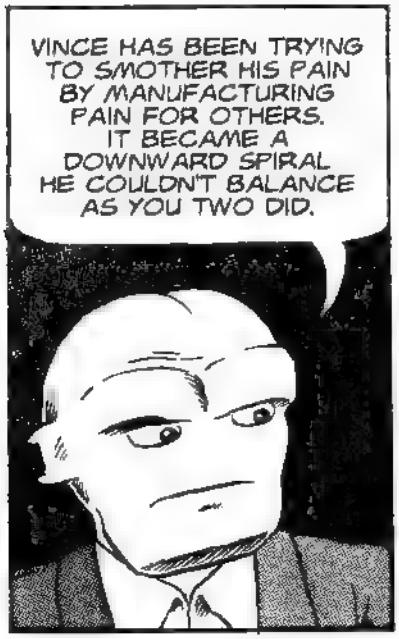
YAHOO!!!
YOU'VE FOUND OUR HOME! WE DIDN'T THINK IT WAS POSSIBLE.
IT'S THE HOME OF ALL THREE OF YOU "GODS." OF COURSE.

BUT WHY DID VINCE LEAVE SO WILLINGLY?
BECAUSE BEING HERE IS HORRIBLE FOR US. IT'S AS THOUGH YOUR LIFE IS CONSTANTLY DRAINING OUT OF YOU. A PERPETUAL DISCOMFORT.

YOUR WHOLE EXISTENCE HERE WAS A LIFE OF PAIN?
NO, ONLY AT FIRST. OH, THAT WAS TERRIBLE.

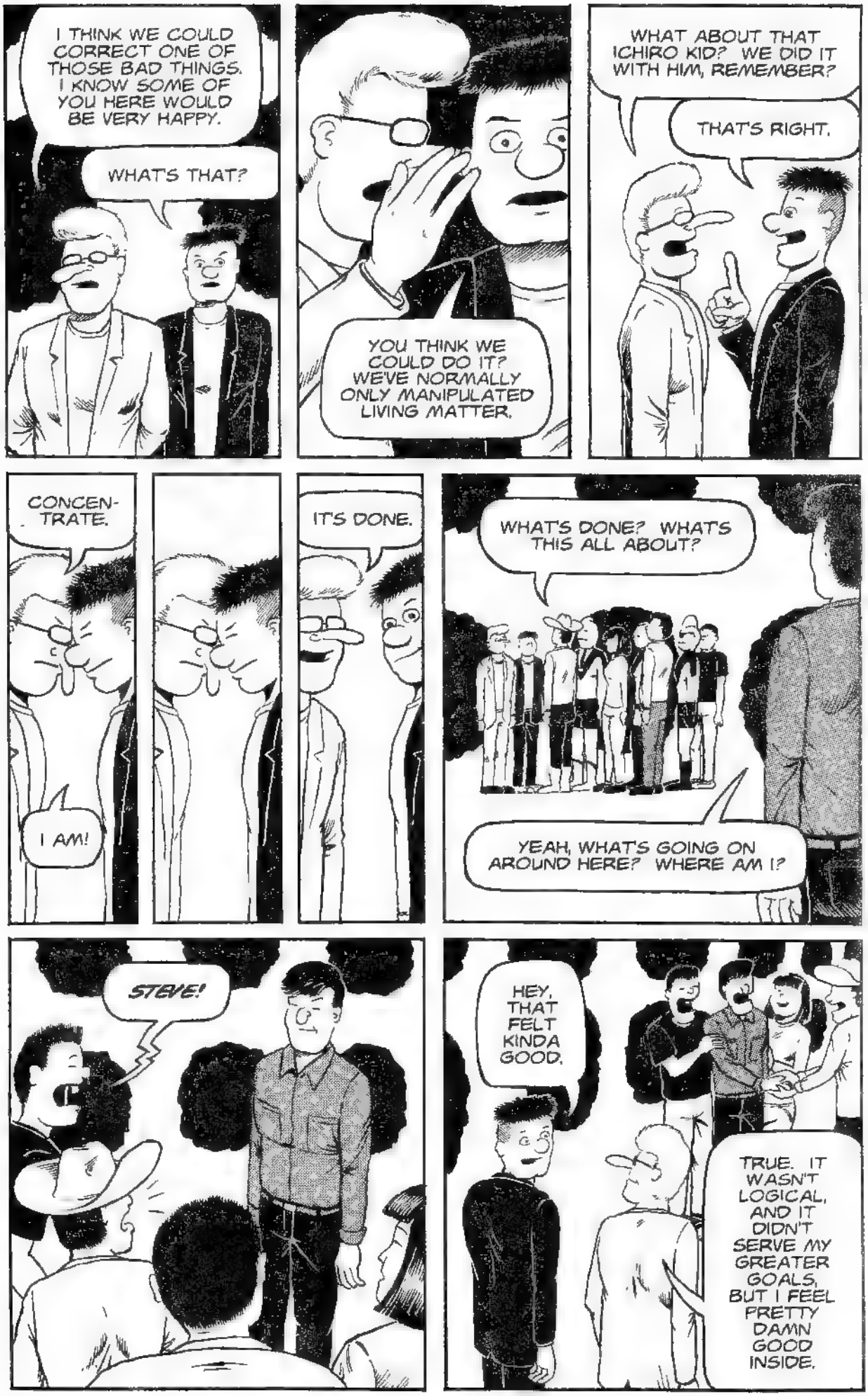

WE STUMBLED OUT OF THAT CROSSROADS COMPLETELY DIS-ORIENTED, IN ABSOLUTE AGONY. BUT IT GOT BETTER WHEN YOU FOUND A FOCUS. I FOCUSED ON TRYING TO MAKE EVERYTHING ORDERLY.

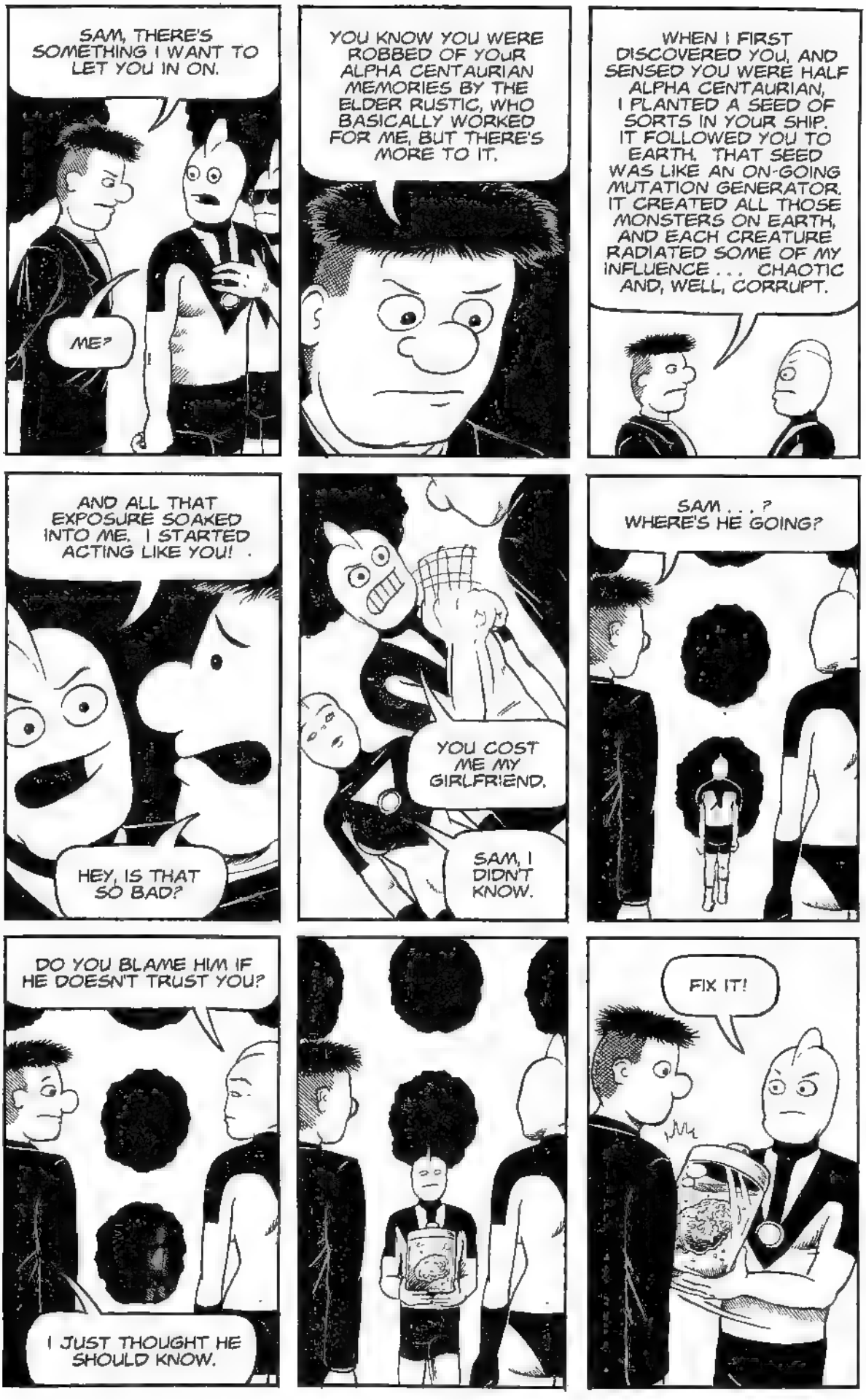
BOZO, HERE, TRIED TO MAKE EVERYTHING CHAOTIC. I'M GRATEFUL, TOO, BECAUSE THAT BALANCE KEPT US SO FOCUSED THAT THE PAIN WAS KEPT IN CHECK.


VINCE HAS BEEN TRYING TO SMOTHER HIS PAIN BY MANUFACTURING PAIN FOR OTHERS. IT BECAME A DOWNWARD SPIRAL HE COULDN'T BALANCE AS YOU TWO DID.

I WONDER WHY HE COULDN'T COME UP WITH A MORE GRACEFUL WAY OF DISTRACTING OR FOCUSING HIMSELF? WHY HE HAD TO MAKE HORROR TO "ENTERTAIN HIMSELF," SO TO SPEAK.

I DON'T THINK HE HAD IT IN HIM TO THINK OF A BETTER WAY, REALLY. THE THINGS HE DID HE SAW AS COMPLEX AND RIVETING, BUT THEY WERE JUST . . . BAD. SIMPLY BAD.


I THINK WE COULD CORRECT ONE OF THOSE BAD THINGS. I KNOW SOME OF YOU HERE WOULD BE VERY HAPPY.
WHAT'S THAT?
YOU THINK WE COULD DO IT? WE'VE NORMALLY ONLY MANIPULATED LIVING MATTER.
WHAT ABOUT THAT ICHIRO KID? WE DID IT WITH HIM, REMEMBER?
THAT'S RIGHT.
CONCEN-TRATE.
I AM!
IT'S DONE.
WHAT'S DONE? WHAT'S THIS ALL ABOUT?
YEAH, WHAT'S GOING ON AROUND HERE? WHERE AM I?
STEVE!
HEY, THAT FELT KINDA GOOD.
TRUE. IT WASN'T LOGICAL, AND IT DIDN'T SERVE MY GREATER GOALS, BUT I FEEL PRETTY DAMN GOOD INSIDE.


SAM, THERE'S SOMETHING I WANT TO LET YOU IN ON.
ME?
YOU KNOW YOU WERE ROBBED OF YOUR ALPHA CENTAURIAN MEMORIES BY THE ELDER RUSTIC, WHO BASICALLY WORKED FOR ME, BUT THERE'S MORE TO IT.
WHEN I FIRST DISCOVERED YOU, AND SENSED YOU WERE HALF ALPHA CENTAURIAN, I PLANTED A SEED OF SORTS IN YOUR SHIP. IT FOLLOWED YOU TO EARTH. THAT SEED WAS LIKE AN ON-GOING MUTATION GENERATOR. IT CREATED ALL THOSE MONSTERS ON EARTH, AND EACH CREATURE RADIATED SOME OF MY INFLUENCE . . . CHAOTIC AND, WELL, CORRUPT.
AND ALL THAT EXPOSURE SOAKED INTO ME. I STARTED ACTING LIKE YOU!
HEY, IS THAT SO BAD?
YOU COST ME MY GIRLFRIEND.
SAM, I DIDN'T KNOW.
SAM . . . ? WHERE'S HE GOING?
DO YOU BLAME HIM IF HE DOESN'T TRUST YOU?
I JUST THOUGHT HE SHOULD KNOW.
FIX IT!

CONCENTRATE.
I AM!
WELL, GOOD LUCK TO YOU ALL.
WAITAMINUTE. YOU'RE GOING THROUGH, TOO?
YOU HAVE NO IDEA HOW MUCH WE ACHE FOR IT. PLEASE DON'T BEGRUDGE US THIS.
NO, BUT... WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO US? I MEAN, VINCE'S INFLUENCE VANISHED. WILL YOURS?
JUST THE PHYSICAL APPEARANCES CHANGED BACK. THE CONSEQUENCES REMAINED.
WHAT WILL WE CHANGE INTO? WHAT DID THE UNIVERSE LOOK LIKE BEFORE YOU GOT HERE?
YOU'LL SEE.
I'VE GOT IT!
I'VE GOT IT BACK!
ALPHA CENTAURI REALLY *IS* A WORLD OF ANSWERS. I WANT TO GO THERE. LIVE THERE.
YOU'LL ALL COME WITH ME WON'T YOU?
HEY, WHERE ELSE WE GONNA GO?
IT SOUNDS WONDERFUL.

PERHAPS WE COULD SERVE AS AMBASSADORS, AND TAKE SOME OF ALPHA CENTAURI'S KNOWLEDGE BACK TO EARTH?
YOU'RE HIRED. THE SQUAD IS OFFICIALLY REINSTATED. YOU'LL BE LOVED BY YOUR COUNTRY AGAIN, BELIEVE ME.
THANKS, SAM.
I'M SORRY I WAS SO WRONG ABOUT YOU, TOO.
PARDON OUR IMPATIENCE, BUT, WE'VE GOT TO RUN.
AFTER YOU, CHAOZ.
NO, AFTER YOU. AND MY NAME IS MIKE, REMEMBER?
OH, THAT'S RIGHT. WE'LL BE STRIPPED OF OUR RANKS OVER THERE, WON'T WE? I WONDER IF MY JOB AT THE PHARMACY IS STILL OPEN?
I CAN ALWAYS GET YOU ON DOWN AT THE PLANT, ORDAIN. I MEAN . . . GARY.
THE END

MR. MAMOULIAN

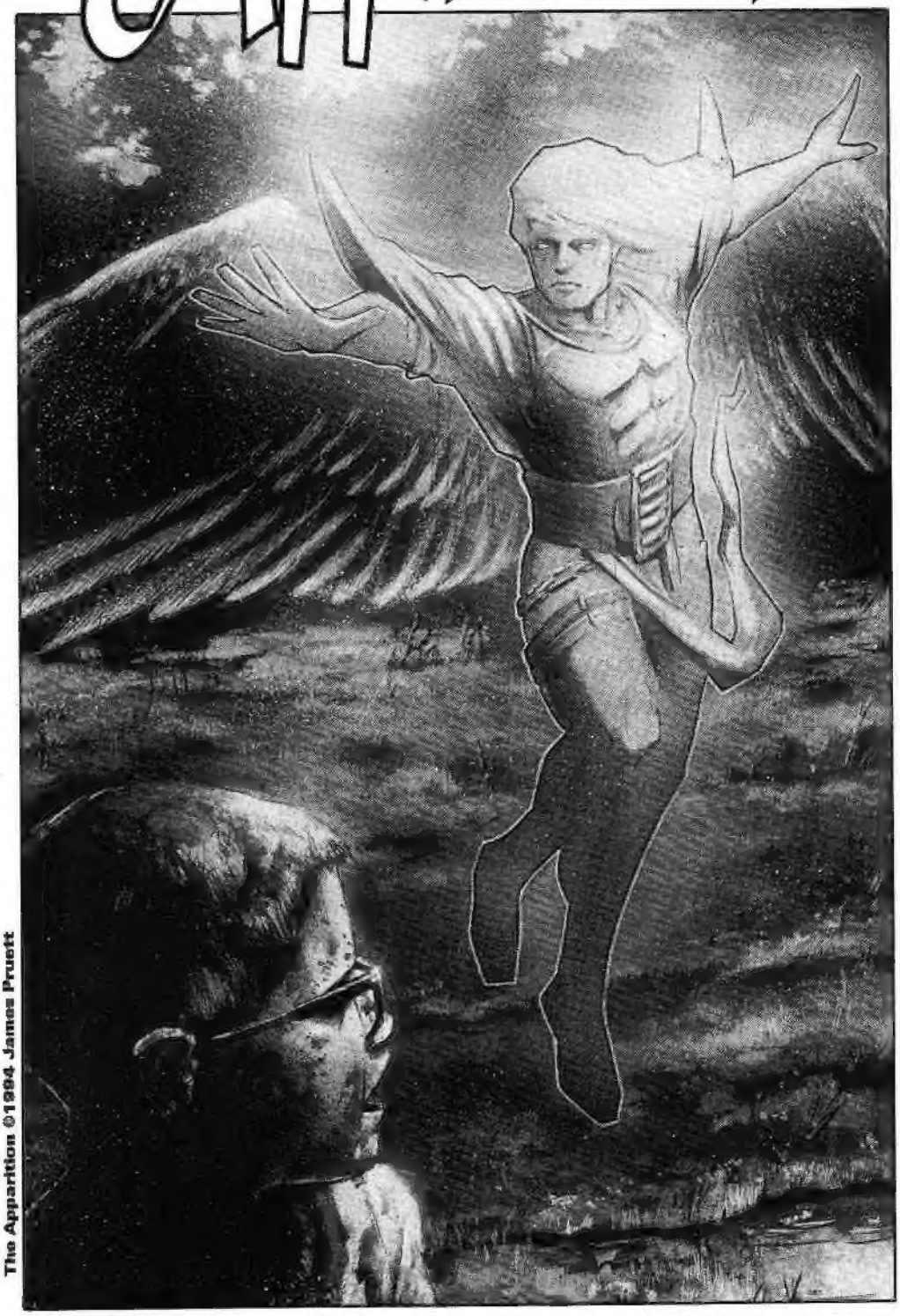
HUSH-HUSH

21 BOLLAND 13-12 '87

I PACK A ROD, YOU KNOW.
YOU WHAT ?
THAT'S WHAT US BOYS IN THE DEPARTMENT CALL A GUN. IT'S HERE UNDER MY COAT... I SURPRISE YOU, DON'T I ? DO YOU WANT TO SEE IT ?
...ER...
I SEE YOU'RE CURIOUS. "WHAT DEPARTMENT ?" I HEAR YOU ASK. MI6, THAT'S WHAT DEPARTMENT. THE CIRCUS. I KID YOU NOT. WHAT DO YOU SAY TO THAT ...EH ?
WELL, I DON'T KNOW
OOH YES... I'VE BEEN IN THIS LINE OF WORK FOR OVER FORTY YEARS. UNDERCOVER, SO TO SPEAK. JUST KEEPING AN EYE OPEN. MAINTAINING A LOW PROFILE. SHOULDN'T REALLY TELL YOU. HUSH-HUSH, YOU KNOW!
CHAP APPROACHED ME IN CAIRO. 1942. DID I TELL YOU I WAS IN EL ALAMEIN ? NASTY BUSINESS. SAW A CHAP WITH NO FEET ONCE. ANYWAY, THIS CHAP — THE FIRST CHAP — SAID : "CARSTAIRS" — THAT'S MY NAME, CARSTAIRS — HE SAID : "CARSTAIRS, HOW WOULD YOU LIKE TO HELP KEEP THE WORLD SAFE FOR FREEDOM & DEMOCRACY ?
I SAID : "LEAD ON McDUFF !" HE TOLD ME ABOUT HOW UNCLE JOE WAS PLANNING TO GOBBLE UP THE WHOLE WORLD. STALIN, THAT IS.
I GATHERED
THE BINTS !
THE BINTS ?
IN CAIRO !.. THE BINTS ! THE WHOLE PLACE WAS ONE BIG FUCKING KNOCKING SHOP ! JESUS H. CHRIST ! I GOT MY LEG OVER MORE BINTS IN CAIRO THAN YOU'VE HAD HOT DINNERS, MATE, AND I'LL TELL YOU THAT FOR NOTHING !
DO YOU KNOW HOW BIG IT IS !?
BIG ?
HOW BIG. IF YOU LOOK AT THE GLOBE, IT TAKES UP THE WHOLE OF ONE HALF OF THE GLOBE. RUSSIA ! WHO WON THE WAR ? I'LL TELL YOU WHO. THE GERMANS LOST, BUT THE RUSSIANS WON ! THAT'S WHO !
YOU SEE THOSE TWO OVER THERE ? HE CAN'T KEEP HIS STICKY HANDS OFF HER. RANDY BASTARD ! I'VE HAD MY EYE ON HER FOR SOME TIME NOW. HER NAME'S LUDMILA RUSANOVNA. G.R.U. AGENT ! THERE, I'VE SHOCKED YOU. HAVEN'T I !?
BUT DON'T YOU WORRY, I'VE GOT HER IN MY SIGHTS ! THE DEPARTMENT KNOWS ABOUT HER AND HER ASSOCIATES ! SHOULDN'T REALLY BE TELLING YOU ANY OF THIS. KEEP IT UNDER YOUR HAT ! OKAY ?
BELCHER !
THAT WAS THE CHAP'S NAME. RUNS THE DEPARTMENT NOW. OFFICIAL SECRET, YOU UNDERSTAND !
WHAT DID YOU SAY YOUR NAME WAS ?
YOU'RE NOT A RUSSIAN ARE YOU ?

As seen in the pages of the Harvey Award Nominated **NEGATIVE BURN**

THE Apparition



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Written by **James Pruett** with fully painted art by **Michael Gaydos**

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